



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FORT McHENRY NM&HS
2400 E. Fort Ave.
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230-5393
www.nps.gov/fomc

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Dear Fee Waiver Applicant:

National Park Service regulations allow school groups and other bona fide national and international academic institutions to obtain a waiver for park entrance fees, provided that the visit is for educational purposes, and the resources or facilities the group proposes to use support those purposes.

Please read the following carefully, as this reflects a change from past requirements. There are three criteria that a group must meet to qualify for an academic fee waiver: 1) eligibility, 2) purpose, and 3) relevance. The following is an explanation of each of these criteria:

Eligibility: Applicants must prove they are a bona fide academic institution by submitting **ONE of the following:**

- A statement confirming educational tax-exemption from the IRS or the applicant's national, state, or local tax authority; or
- A statement of accreditation from a recognized national, regional, state, or local authority; or
- A statement from a bona fide academic institution confirming that the group is visiting for the purpose of providing transferable educational credit based on a curriculum.

For a Maryland school, simply stating the County on the application will be sufficient to show eligibility, as lists are retained of all Maryland schools.

Educational Purpose of the Visit

Applicants must provide a written statement confirming that the visit supports a specific curriculum for which academic credit is offered. A specific lesson plan should be submitted for an elementary or high school group or a copy of the course description from the college catalog for a college group.

Relevance of Park Resources or Facilities

Applicants must provide a written statement identifying the park resources and/or facilities that will be used to support the educational purpose of the visit, and how they are relevant to that purpose. As an example, a class studying patriotism might be scheduled for a ranger-led flag talk or a class that has studied U.S. History during the current school year is reinforcing the lesson on the War of 1812. (A class that studied U.S. History during the previous school year is not showing current relevance). (See example letter).

If you meet the criteria above, please read the following instructions as to how to apply for the Fee Waiver.

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN ACADEMIC FEE WAIVER AT FORT MCHENRY NM&HS

Please submit the following to the address above or by fax:

1. Official Application for Waiver of Fees (attached)
2. Current, official documentation of eligibility as described on previous page. It is insufficient to merely state or imply this on the organization's letterhead. Your fee waiver request cannot be approved without one of these documents of eligibility. (Maryland schools need to merely list the County where the school is located.)
3. A cover letter, on letterhead, explaining what the educational purpose is and how it is related to park resources. (A general statement that the visit is for "educational purposes" is insufficient.) If your group is using a commercial tour company, the group (not the company) must apply for the fee waiver. Provide the name of the course (class) and a brief description from a course catalog. The applicant must be providing educational credit hours based on a specific course of instruction. For lower grades, please provide a lesson plan that shows how the visit is related to the curriculum, class, or lesson. (See example).

Please be aware that the reservation process and the fee waiver application process are two separate and distinct functions. You must request a reservation by calling or faxing the Group Reservations Office. You may call 410-962-4290 extension 243 or fax 410-962-2500. After you have made your reservation, you may then apply for the educational fee waiver for that visit by mailing your application packet to the address at the top of this letter, by faxing it to 410-962-2500, or by e-mailing it to me at the address below.

All application packets must be received by the park at least two weeks prior to the visit.

If your request is approved, you will receive an academic fee waiver and your application will be returned to you marked "Approved". This will allow free entry for one chaperone per student. **The group leader must present a copy of the approved fee waiver at the park Visitor Center Information Desk upon arrival.**

If your request is denied, you will receive a letter from the park explaining why your group does not qualify. You may reapply with the correct documentation provided there is sufficient time. Any group visiting without an approved fee waiver will be charged the regular adult entrance fee of \$7.00; children under 16 are free.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 410-962-4290 ext 205 or by e-mail at Susan_Knauer@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

Susan Knauer
Fee Program Manager

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Fort McHenry NM&HS
2400 E. Fort Ave. Baltimore, MD 21230
(410)962-4290 ext 205 fax (410)962-2500

APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF FEES FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDY

Contact Name _____

School Name in full _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip/County _____

Name of Tour Agency (if applicable) _____

Date of Scheduled Visit _____ Approximate Time of Arrival _____

Number of Students: _____ Number of teachers and chaperones: _____

_____/_____/_____/_____

School phone Cell(optional) Fax E-mail(optional)

Park areas you plan to visit: _____

Signature/Title

If approved, this form will be returned to you. If you have not received this form at least one week before your visit, please contact us immediately at the number listed above. Please check in at the Visitor Center Information Desk upon arrival.

FEE WAIVER APPROVED _____ (Must be signed by NPS personnel to be valid)

FEE WAIVER DENIED _____ (See attached)

_____, Fee Program Manager
Signature Date

EXAMPLE OF LETTER:

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Date

Dear Fee Program Manager:

This letter is to request a fee waiver for our school's visit that has been scheduled for _____. We will attend a ranger-led flag program at 10:30 after viewing the multi-media presentation in the Gallery and enjoying the exhibits that are offered.

In Baltimore County, our Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum consists of units on Maryland, both past and present. We discuss the various geographic regions, Chesapeake Bay, ports, major cities, and historic landmarks. We discuss how Fort McHenry played a significant role in protecting the United States from Britain during the War of 1812 and how the Star-Spangled was written. The purpose of our visit is to reinforce the material that the students learned in their Social Studies Class and to understand and relate to the patriotic attitude that was so prevalent during that time. Attached is a lesson plan that is used for that specific lesson as well as a copy of the accreditation certificate from the Middle State Commission on Higher Education.

Please consider our application for free adult admission and let us know if you need any other documentation.

Thank you.

Signature/Title